

# News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara McGuinness

September 29, 2005

Jeff Duncan

(202) 225-2836

## MARKEY LEGISLATION INCREASES HOME HEATING OIL RESERVE BY 150%

### *Energy and Commerce Committee Moves To Increase the North East Home Heating Oil Reserve By 5 Million Barrels*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With home heating costs skyrocketing across the country, the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee passed an amendment to the Gasoline for America's Security Act (H. R. 3893) offered by Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA) that would increase the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve from its current level of two million barrels to five million barrels.

"My legislation will increase the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve by 150% -- a very welcome victory for consumers across New England who will be hit hard this winter with the spiraling cost of home heating oil prices," said **Rep. Markey**.

The Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve was created by Rep. Markey in 2000, as part of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The Reserve ensures that consumers in the Northeast who depend on home heating oil during the winter months would not freeze due to weather-related supply disruptions or other regional energy supply emergencies. The Reserve is designed to provide enough heating oil to cover a ten-day supply disruption, which the Department of Energy estimated would cover the time it took to ship heating oil up to the Northeast from the Gulf of Mexico. The Department of Energy calculated that a ten day supply would be two million barrels, the level at which the Reserve – located in facilities located in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island -- is stocked today.

"Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have made it clear that the oil infrastructure in the Gulf cannot operate seamlessly during major storms. It is critical that we increase the size of the Reserve as there is significant doubt as to whether a 10 day stock is enough to overcome a supply shortfall from the Gulf," said **Rep. Markey**. "We have been told by the weather forecasters to expect an unusually cold winter in the Northeast. The price of home heating fuels is already going through the roof. Increasing the North East Home Heating oil reserve we are making sure that no families are left without heat due to oil supply disruptions or national emergencies," he concluded.

Although only eight percent of homes across the country rely on heating oil, home heating oil is the primary heating source for 31 percent of the homes in the Northeastern United States. In fact, Northeasterners make up more than 75 percent of the entire U.S. market for home heating oil. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the South and forced the evacuation of 683 offshore platforms much as 50% for home heating oil and natural gas.

For more on Rep. Markey's work to increase energy savings for consumers check out <http://www.house.gov/markey/>